

## **AMENDMENTS**

### **In the Claims**

The following is a marked-up version of the claims with the language that is underlined (“\_\_\_”) being added and the language that contains strikethrough (“—”) being deleted:

1. (Currently Amended) ~~Logic stored on a~~ A computer readable medium storing logic that when executed causes a computer to perform processing of a vacation ~~processing request system~~, the logic comprising:

logic configured to provide a workload estimate comprising at least a first workload statistic that is used to operate a first call center, wherein the workload estimate is based at least in part upon data related to whether past workload estimates were accepted;

logic configured to provide a vacation eligibility criteria based on at least a first rule;

logic configured to process the vacation request based on the workload estimate and the vacation eligibility criteria comprising:

logic configured to receive the vacation request of the first employee;

logic configured to deny the vacation request due to a lack of vacation availability at a time of the vacation request; and

logic configured to grant the vacation request due to a vacation availability at a time after the vacation request was denied.

2. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium ~~system~~ of claim 1, wherein the first workload statistic comprises an estimated volume of telephone calls that the first call center is expected to handle over a first period of time.

3. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium ~~system~~ of claim 1, wherein the first workload statistic comprises an estimated volume of telephone calls that the first call center is expected to handle over a first period of time, and wherein the estimated volume of telephone calls is derived from historical call volume data obtained from a communications switch.

4. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium ~~system~~ of claim 1, wherein the first workload statistic comprises an expected number of operators needed to operate the first call center during a first period of time.

5. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium ~~system~~ of claim 1, wherein the first workload statistic is derived from telephone call data stored in a database of a POTS switch.

6. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium ~~system~~ of claim 1, wherein the first rule is derived from an employment grade of the first employee, and wherein the employment grade comprises at least one of a payscale and a length of service of the first employee.

7. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium system of claim 1, wherein the workload estimate is provided to the first call center in a timely basis, the timely basis comprising at least one of an hourly basis, a daily basis, a weekly basis, a monthly basis, a quarterly basis, a semi-annual basis, and an annual basis.

8. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium system of claim 7, wherein the vacation eligibility criteria is provided in a timely basis, the timely basis comprising at least one of an hourly basis, a daily basis, a weekly basis, a monthly basis, a quarterly basis, a semi-annual basis, and an annual basis.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium system of claim 1, wherein granting the vacation request comprises transmitting an e-mail to the first employee.

11. (Currently Amended) A method of processing a vacation request, the method comprising:

providing, using a computing element, a workload estimate comprising at least a first workload statistic that is used to operate a first call center, wherein the workload estimate is based at least in part upon data related to whether past workload estimates were accepted;

providing, using a computing element, a vacation eligibility criteria based on at least a first rule;

processing, using a computing element, the vacation request of a first employee based on the workload estimate and the vacation eligibility criteria, wherein processing the vacation request comprises:

receiving, using a computing element, the vacation request of the first employee;

denying, using a computing element, the vacation request due to a lack of vacation availability at a time of the vacation request; and

granting, using a computing element, the vacation request due to a vacation availability at a time after the vacation request was denied.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein the first workload statistic comprises an estimated volume of telephone calls that the first call center is expected to handle over a first period of time.

13. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein the first workload statistic comprises an estimated volume of telephone calls that the first call center is expected to handle over a first period of time, and wherein the estimated volume of telephone calls is derived from historical call volume data obtained from a communications switch.

14. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein the first workload statistic comprises an expected number of operators needed to operate the first call center during a first period of time.

15. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein the first workload statistic is derived from telephone call data stored in a database of a POTS switch.

16. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein the first rule is derived from an employment grade of the first employee, and wherein the employment grade comprises at least one of a payscale and a length of service of the first employee.

17. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein the workload estimate is provided to the first call center in a timely basis, the timely basis comprising at least one of an hourly basis, a daily basis, a weekly basis, a monthly basis, a quarterly basis, a semi-annual basis, and an annual basis.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein the vacation eligibility criteria is provided in a timely basis, the timely basis comprising at least one of an hourly basis, a daily basis, a weekly basis, a monthly basis, a quarterly basis, a semi-annual basis, and an annual basis.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 11, wherein granting the vacation request comprises transmitting an e-mail to the first employee.

21. (Canceled)

22. (Currently Amended) A vacation request processing system, the system comprising:

a memory comprising:

computer-readable code that provides a workload estimate comprising at least a first workload statistic that is used to operate a first call center, wherein the workload estimate is based at least in part upon data related to whether past workload estimates were accepted;

computer-readable code that provides a vacation eligibility criteria based on at least a first rule;

computer-readable code that processes the vacation request of a first employee based on the workload estimate and the vacation eligibility criteria; and

a processor for executing the computer-readable code stored in the memory, wherein memory further comprises:

computer-readable code that receives the vacation request of the first employee;

computer-readable code that denies the vacation request due to a lack of vacation availability at a time of the vacation request; and

computer-readable code that grants the vacation request due to a vacation availability at a time after the vacation request was denied.

23. (Original) The system of claim 22, wherein the first workload statistic comprises an estimated volume of telephone calls that the first call center is expected to handle over a first period of time.

24. (Original) The system of claim 22, wherein the first workload statistic comprises an estimated volume of telephone calls that the first call center is expected to handle over a first period of time, and wherein the estimated volume of telephone calls is derived from historical call volume data obtained from a communications switch.

25. (Original) The system of claim 22, wherein the first workload statistic comprises an expected number of operators needed to operate the first call center during a first period of time.

26. (Original) The system of claim 22, wherein the first workload statistic is derived from telephone call data stored in a database of a POTS switch.

27. (Original) The system of claim 22, wherein the first rule is derived from an employment grade of the first employee, and wherein the employment grade comprises at least one of a payscale and a length of service of the first employee.

28. (Original) The system of claim 22, wherein the workload estimate is provided to the first call center in a timely basis, the timely basis comprising at least one of an

hourly basis, a daily basis, a weekly basis, a monthly basis, a quarterly basis, a semi-annual basis, and an annual basis.

29. (Original) The system of claim 28, wherein the vacation eligibility criteria is provided in a timely basis, the timely basis comprising at least one of an hourly basis, a daily basis, a weekly basis, a monthly basis, a quarterly basis, a semi-annual basis, and an annual basis.

30. (Canceled)

31. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 22, wherein granting the vacation request computer-readable code transmits an e-mail to the first employee.